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Interview Summary

On January 10, 2008 an Interview was conducted with Representative Ronald Reichman (Reg. No.: 26,796). Agreed, the prior art of record does not teach the limitation of claim 18. Specifically, agreed, that the combined teaching of prior art does not teach the following limitation: "notifying the carrier by the recipient to destroy the mail". Furthermore, changes to claim language were discussed in order to clarify patentable subject matter and avoid issues under 35 USC 112 and 101. Finally, the Representative gave authorization for the Examiner Amendment to amend the claims as follows, and, thereby, place the claims into condition of allowance.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

The application has been amended as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS

1. A method that enables a recipient to inform a carrier of the manner in which the recipient wants some or all of their mail ~~that is placed in trays or tubs by the sender and is transported in trays or tubs~~ delivered, said method comprises the steps of:

placing by the sender the mail in at least one of trays and tubs for delivery;

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scanning the name and physical address of the recipient and the sender of the mail after the mail has been sealed;

capturing by the sender the name and physical address of the recipient and the sender in the form of an image;

transmitting the image to a data center where the image is processed by translating the image consisting of text and graphics to selected alphanumerics;

translating the name and physical address of the recipient into an e-mail address;

notifying the recipient of the expected delivery of the sealed mail and indicating the selected alphanumerics of the translated image;

depositing with the carrier the sealed mail containing the recipient's name and physical address and the sender's name and address;

notifying a data center by the recipient of the manner in which the recipient wants some or all of their mail delivered;

if the recipient desires to destroy the mail, notifying the carrier by the recipient to destroy the mail, if the recipient does not want to destroy the mail,

notifying by the data center the carrier of the manner in which the recipient wants the mail delivered; and

delivering by the carrier mail to the recipient in the manner specified by the recipient to the carrier.

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2. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the recipient is notified of the estimated time in which the mail is going to be delivered.

3. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the recipient notifies the carrier to deliver the mail to a specified name and address.

4. (Cancelled).

5. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the recipient notifies the carrier to open the mail.

6. The method claimed in claim [[4]]1, further including the steps of:
informing the carrier to e-mail the contents of the mailpiece to the recipient; and
mailing by e-mail the contents of the mailpiece to the recipient.

7. The method claimed in claim [[4]]1, further including the steps of:
informing the carrier to e-mail the contents of the mailpiece to one or more specified e-mail addresses; and
mailing by e-mail the contents of the mailpiece to the specified email addresses.

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8. The method claimed in claim ~~[[4]]~~1, further including the steps of:
informing the carrier to send by facsimile the contents of the mailpiece to the recipient; and
mailing by facsimile the contents of the mailpiece to the recipient.

9. The method claimed in claim ~~[[4]]~~1, further including the steps of:
informing the carrier to facsimile the contents of the mailpiece to one or more specified facsimile numbers; and
sending by facsimile the contents of the mailpiece to the specified facsimile numbers.

10. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the recipient notifies the carrier to deliver the mail to the recipient at a different address.

11. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the recipient notifies the carrier to deliver the mail to the recipient by a slower delivery method than that paid for by the sender.

12. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the recipient notifies the carrier to deliver the mail to the recipient by a faster delivery method than that paid for by the sender.

13. The method claimed in claim 1, further including the step of:
charging the recipient for receiving notification of the availability of the deposited mail.

14. The method claimed in claim 1, further including the step of:
charging the recipient for delivering mail to the recipient in the manner specified by the recipient to the carrier.

15. The method claimed in claim 1, further including the step of:
charging the recipient for receiving notification of the availability of the deposited mail; and
charging the recipient for delivering mail to the recipient in the manner specified by the recipient to the carrier.

16. The method claimed in claim 1, further including the step of:
informing the sender of the delivery of the mail.

17. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the recipient notifies the carrier to hold the mail for a specified period of time.

18. (Cancelled).

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19. The method claimed in claim [[1]]6, wherein the recipient notifies the carrier to recycle the material comprising the mail.

20. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the recipient is notified via e-mail of the availability of the deposited mail.

21. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the recipient is notified via telephone of the availability of the deposited mail.

22. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the recipient is notified via facsimile of the availability of the deposited mail.

23. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the recipient is notified via television of the availability of the deposited mail.

24. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the carrier is notified via e-mail of the manner in which the recipient wants the mail delivered.

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25. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the carrier is notified via facsimile of the manner in which the recipient wants the mail delivered.

26. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the carrier is notified via telephone of the manner in which the recipient wants the mail delivered.

27. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the recipient notifies a data center who notifies the carrier of the manner in which the recipient wants the mail delivered.

28. The method claimed in claim 1, wherein the mail deposited with the carrier contains a graphic.

29. The method claimed in claim 28, wherein the graphic is a stamp.

30. The method claimed in claim 28, wherein the graphic is a postal indicia.

31. The method claimed in claim 28, wherein the graphic is a permit.

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32. The method claimed in claim 28, wherein the graphic is carrier symbology.

33. The method claimed in claim 28, wherein the graphic is captured and translated.

34. The method claimed in claim 33, wherein the graphic is stored.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1-3, 5-17 and 19-34 are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

As per independent claim 1, the best prior art, Kuebert et al. (US 2002/0165729) teaches a method and system for flexible mail delivery, comprising: scanning the name and physical address of the recipient and the sender of the mail after the mail has been sealed; capturing by the sender the name and physical address of the recipient and the sender in the form of an image; transmitting the image to a data center where the image is processed by translating the image consisting of text and graphics to selected alphanumerics; recognizing the name and physical address of the recipient; notifying the

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recipient of the expected delivery of the sealed mail and indicating the selected alphanumerics of the translated image; depositing with the carrier the sealed mail containing the recipient's name and physical address and the sender's name and address; notifying a data center by the recipient of the manner in which the recipient wants some or all of their mail delivered; delivering by the carrier mail to the recipient in the manner specified by the recipient to the carrier.

However, Kuebert et al. fails to teach or fairly suggest: notifying the carrier by the recipient to destroy the mail.

The best foreign art, Kara et al. (WO 99/21330), while teaching a method for transmission of a document from a sending location to a receiving location wherein the document is physically or electronically transmitted by a sending location to a letter server operated by a delivery service, and the letter server reproduces the document in original quality, accompanied by delivery instructions, fails to teach or fairly suggest: notifying the carrier by the recipient to destroy the mail.

The best NPL prior art, Macskassy et al. (EmailValet: Learning User Preferences for Wireless Email), while teaching e-mail delivery technique based on recipients preferences, fails to teach or fairly suggest: notifying the carrier by the recipient to destroy the mail.

The remaining dependent claims are considered allowable, as they are dependent and based off of an allowable independent claims.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submission should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reason for Allowance".

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Igor Borissov whose telephone number is 571-272-6801. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John W. Hayes can be reached on 571-272-6708. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

/Igor N. Borissov/

Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3628

01/27/2008